



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8**

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July 5, 2007

Ref: 8EPR-N

Ms. Mary Risser
Superintendent, Dinosaur National Monument
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Dinosaur National Monument
4545 East Highway 40
Dinosaur, Colorado 81610-9724

RE: Quarry Visitors Center, Dinosaur National Monument
Draft Environmental Impact Statement: CEQ# 20070242

Dear Ms. Risser:

In accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 42 U.S.C Section 4231 et. seq., and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act 42 U.S.C Section 7609, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement of the Quarry Visitors Center, Dinosaur National Monument in Dinosaur, Colorado.

EPA appreciates the difficult decisions the National Park Service (NPS) must face in meeting the purpose and need of this project and of losing designation as a National Historic Landmark through destruction of the deteriorating building. The role of the NPS at this site is protection, preservation and management of paleontologic resources as part of geological features. In addition, the NPS must reduce hazards that threaten the safety of park visitors and staff and long term viability of park infrastructure. The issues of protection, preservation and physical hazards appear to override any decisions in favor of the National Landmark designation and justify the rehabilitation and construction proposed. The Visitor Center protects and showcases the dinosaur fossils in a unique way through viewing the fossils exposed in the rock face. In addition, project objectives outlined in the DEIS ensure that this personal experience with the fossils through education, viewing and touching can continue.

Section 106 consultations were thorough and EPA concurs with the approach of developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the historic preservation consulting agencies to assure thorough development of mitigation measures.

The Office of the Federal Environmental Executive released a new Executive Order on January 24, 2007, "Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management" (EO 13423) which requires all federal agencies to:

- Reduce energy intensity 30% by 2015
- Reduce Green House Gas Emissions through energy savings by 3% annually or 30% by 2105
- Build Performance: Construct or renovate buildings in accordance with sustainability strategies, including resource conservation, reduction, and use; citing; and indoor environmental quality

This DEIS mentions several commendable "green" practices that will be employed during construction (e.g. recycling of materials, green toilets, low flush toilets, windows etc.); however, it does not indicate whether the scope of this EO, as stated above, will be pursued. We recommend that the NPS evaluate and summarize compliance with this EO for this project. These practices will reduce the environmental footprint of the park and provide energy savings as well.

Pursuant to EPA policy and guidance, EPA rates the environmental impact of an action and the adequacy of the NEPA analysis. EPA has rated the preferred alternative "LO" (Lack of Objections). This "LO" rating means that the review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the preferred alternative. An explanation of the rating criteria is enclosed.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this project. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our comments, please contact me (303) 312-6004 or Robin Coursen (303)312-6695 of my staff.

Sincerely,

/s/ Deborah Lebow
for Larry Svoboda
Director, NEPA Program
Office of Ecosystems Protection and Remediation

Enclosure

